

INFORMAL REMARKS  
OF  
WILLIAM F. RABORN  
ATTENDING THE ACCEPTANCE OF  
THE JAMES FORRESTAL MEMORIAL AWARD  
TO  
THE NATIONAL SECURITY INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION  
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SHERATON PARK HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

I am deeply moved by the honor you have paid me tonight with the 1965 James Forrestal Memorial Award. It is a most rewarding experience to join the privileged few who have been honored in this way, and I will always remember it.

I was in the operating forces of the Navy when Mr. Forrestal was Secretary of the Navy, and later when he became our first Secretary of Defense. I knew him as a man who had great faith in people. The vision he displayed in bringing industry and Defense closer together contributed to the development of the Polaris system. This involved the products and efforts of more than 11,000 contractors and government agencies from coast to coast. It was truly a national effort, and a testimonial to James Forrestal's belief that inside and outside government, people should, could, and would work together in the national interest.

This occasion has given me the opportunity to meet and talk with many of you who are close friends and former associates. I hope to meet more of you later, so I will try to keep my remarks short and to the point.

Tonight I want to talk briefly about one of the continuing great challenges which faces all of us in this rapidly changing world.

Fortunately, it is one of the aspects of intelligence that I can talk about. I wish that we could tell you more. I can assure you that we deserve the confidence and the support of the public, and it is gratifying and helpful to have it. But the nature of intelligence is such that we have to operate under very tight restrictions. It has been said that, "Your successes are unheralded -- your failures are trumpeted."

The matter I want to talk about, simply stated, is long-range planning to assimilate new technology, innovation, and change into our many activities.

Every one of us, on a daily basis, has to face the fact that change is not only inevitable -- it is continuous. Defense and space matters have made us very conscious of how fast this rate of change can be. We recognize that we have always to think ahead, that there will always be a need for improving our management systems with which we can plan ahead on a continuous basis and cope with a rapid rate of change.

The most important asset in any organization is people. Certainly this is true in my present job. The enhancement of their collective value is the primary goal of any management procedure. Accordingly, these improved management principles are in full use in the U. S. intelligence business. We, too, have introduced new planning and programming systems which encourage innovation. The new and promising ideas of our people are more easily brought to the front for mature decisions, again emphasizing the human aspect.

Old and largely obsolescent programs have been cut out or replaced. New and more urgent ones have been highlighted and justified. We have thus established a suitable climate in which people can get involved and committed to the concept of progressive improvement through continuous change. Uncertainties are being brought under scrutiny, and we are operating under full realization that our business, like yours, is a dynamic one. We want to make the most effective use of resources, --- that is, people, money and facilities.

Secondly, by systematic long and short range planning we have reduced to a minimum the unknowns in our business. Thus the key to my job, as I see it, is to assure that we have the system --- both today and in the future --- which will best serve our country. We want to ensure that full, accurate and timely knowledge is in the hands of our policy makers on all foreign matters of interest and concern.

No discussion of management can be complete without reference to the vital role which information plays in an organization. Timely and reliable information is one of the essential ingredients for responsible decision-making. A manager without access to factual information can neither control his organization nor plan for its continued growth. This is a truism in industry, and is applicable to other fields of endeavor.

Our highly complex modern society places on us all demands to digest more and more information, in less and less time. It is quite apparent that the time gap between deliberation and action is shrinking fast. With no two points on the earth's surface more than thirty minutes apart, we must now be able to make decisions quickly, or run the risk of having them go by default. Therefore, our country is critically dependent on information processing to ensure that all pertinent information collected is analyzed by talented and competent people, with dissemination as swiftly as possible. With the technical equipment now available from industry, we can continue to stay ahead in this field.

I do not want to leave the impression that intelligence is entering a mechanical, push-button age. Naturally we have a breadth of many skills in our people. We are blessed with an exceptionally high level of human resources in the Intelligence Community and "man" is going to remain the master of the machine as long as the word "intelligence," by any definition, remains a function of the human mind. The load, and the pressure, and the responsibilities, however, are such that we are calling on machines to accelerate the synthesization, and thus to multiply the capabilities of our human resources.

The concept of information gathering and forward planning is not new. The improvements to the management of intelligence, however, are opening new vistas. As good as our methods are today -- and we believe that in many respects they are way out in front of most industrial and institutional applications -- they are already five years old. We are sure that there are ideas on the drawing boards now which will replace them.

While I am not at liberty to go into a whole array of the very satisfying specifics and accomplishments, I can say that a comparison of the forward goals and projected plans and methods of today with those existing ten years ago is like comparing the horse and buggy to the SATURN boosted space vehicle.

In our open society, with its free enterprise system, the dreams and the desires of the people have always been the controlling factor. This is what has given us our position of world leadership today. We all have been working hard on our dreams for many years, and we have come a long, long way.

For my part, I want to assure you that you can be proud of your Intelligence Community and of the fine, loyal and dedicated men and women who so unselfishly devote their lives to your service.